

The Prairie Light Review

Volume 36 | Number 2

Article 21

Spring 5-1-2014

School Fire: Mrs. Klock Remembers

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Recommended Citation

Fortier, Mardelle (2014) "School Fire: Mrs. Klock Remembers," *The Prairie Light Review*: Vol. 36: No. 2, Article 21.
Available at: <http://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol36/iss2/21>

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Little One, don't cry for your Mother.
Forlorn, you are not an orphan.
Never were nor ever shall be.
Fear not. I am with you always.

Little One, don't cry. For your Mother
Holds and comforts you. She loves you
Though she has a funny way of
Showing it sometimes.

You may sometimes feel
Little. One. Don't. Cry for your Mother
Who loves you. You are not alone;
Never were nor ever shall be.

You tell me not to worry, my
Little one, "Don't cry," for your Mother
Does cry for you. I feel your pain
More deeply than I feel my own.

SCHOOL FIRE: MRS. KLOCK REMEMBERS

Poem based on Chicago Tribune, "Man, 74, Stricken Helping Children,"
Dec. 1, 1958

Mardelle Fortier

We saw the fire from our back porch.
Ed ran over—my husky husband;
he was alive then, must have been 74.
Shaking with cold, I chased after him.
He had a heart condition but we
had to do something.

Our Lady of Angels—ablaze.
Black smoke billowed from 2nd floor,
kids jumping out of high windows.
Ed tried to catch them.

A little blonde girl fell, hair on fire.
My husband tore off his coat
to smother the flames. Poor kid—
limp and pale. Would she die? Would Ed?

I ran
home to dial the operator.
"Send all the ambulances in the city."
Panting back, I saw Ed, still helping.
A ladder leaned on the old building.
Pushing and shoving, children struggled down,
one diving head first toward the cement.
Oh, help us. My husband stood at the bottom
white and gasping.

Ed wound up in the hospital, amidst all those
boys and girls with broken bones. He'd suffered
a stroke—but lived—unlike many children.
I can still hear their screams
and those of bereaved parents.
Never again—my hope.